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Can Democracy Meet Its Acid Test?

FOR A LONG TIME now, we've been kicking around in the office a question that doesn't have a pat, ready-made answer. Let's see if we can get it down on paper today.

The question arises out of the conviction that the continuing tension between East and West—what has been called a "cold war" for want of a better term—poses the most serious test of democratic government our young nation has yet faced. And the question is this: Can our democracy meet this acid test?

It is not a rhetorical question. To ask it is not to answer it. To answer it, one must go back to the beginning.

It is difficult, and it may be impossible, to reduce to two the basic premises upon which the American democracy was founded. But we shall hazard it. The two premises upon which both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are based are:

1. Men are created free and equal, and their inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are given them by their Creator.

2. Free men are capable of governing themselves and managing their affairs if their government is based on law and not on arbitrary will.

This was a revolutionary concept. Government of the people, by the people, and for the people did not exist anywhere on earth. With a few notable exceptions, most of the authorities on the subject said it could not work.

It was also a dangerous concept. It involved great risks for the vast majority of the American colonists—not only the ordinary risks of hunger and cold and safety, but also the risk of having to think for themselves.

But it worked.

It worked through long periods of peace—when the industrious Americans developed their great, rich land, established their traditions, and enlarged their institutions.

It worked through crises and panics and depressions when the faith of the Americans in their form of government was greater than their fears of and anxieties over economic dislocations.

And it worked through the early foreign wars, a massive Civil War, and two great World Wars.

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BY 1946, the American democracy had belied the warnings of the doubters and disbelievers. It had successfully weathered the growing pains of a young nation, the transition to a commercial and industrial empire, the emergence into world leadership and world power.

By 1950, however, the American people had reached a stage in the history of civilization, the significance of which was not easily understood. They discovered that their nation, the leader of free peoples everywhere, was arrayed against another great and powerful nation, with a system of government the exact antithesis of American principles, and with a coldly calculated objective of world conquest and world domination.

It was not the first time it had happened. The British historian Toynbee says that 21 times before in the record of civilization, there emerged two colossi. And on each previous time, there was the clash, the knockout blow, the emergence of a victor, the rule of an empire, and finally the dissolution of the survivor. Would it happen a 22nd time?

This was a new experience for the Americans. The regular processes of diplomacy, which had served them so well in peaceful periods of the past, did not work with the Soviet adversary. There was no Pearl Harbor to rally Americans to a massive, decisive military campaign. Here was no problem that could be solved with the dispatch with which Americans would like to solve all their problems. They faced the prospect of living from day to day and from year to year in a twilight zone between war and peace, bearing the heavy financial burdens and many of the anxieties of war without the compensating satisfaction from the hope and expectation of victory.

In sum, the cold war subjected the American system to an entirely new set of stresses and strains. And that the American people have had great difficulty adjusting to the new stresses may be seen in many of the tendencies of the day: the ready and even eager response to demagoguery; the frenzied search for scapegoats; the preoccupation with relatively minor issues that have a strong emotional appeal; the toleration of assaults upon basic liberties and upon free institutions; the labeling of adversaries on the right and the left; the growth of a mood of conformism.

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THIS was not the first time that the American system had been tested. But this time the American people are faced with the prospect of having to live with a problem for a lifetime, perhaps for centuries, if the dread alternative of atomic war is to be avoided.

And so we complete the circle and return to the original question. Can the American democracy meet the greatest test it has yet faced? Our confidence in the collective wisdom and the staying power of American freemen is so vast that our answer must be affirmative.

Nonetheless, the successful pursuit of peace is going to require first of all a renewed acceptance of the revolutionary premises of the Declaration and the Constitution—that men are free and possessed of rights given by their Creator, and that they are competent to manage a system of government based on law.

It is going to require, further, more patience and quiet resolution than we are accustomed to expend on our public affairs. It is going to require the suppression of emotions and the application of the intellect. And it is going to require an awareness that we live in a glass house, and that our actions are constantly under scrutiny by other peoples everywhere.

This will not be easy; it will not be comfortable; it will not even be very satisfying, except in the finer and deeper sense of the word. But it is the only way.

Common Courtesy, Plus Enforcement

IF THE Charlotte Police Department follows through with its promise, Charlotte's long-harried pedestrians will soon be accorded the respect due them from motorists.

It is, and has been for a long time, illegal for motorists to turn into pedestrians at intersections when the signal is with the walkers. As tens of thousands of Charlotteans who have scrambled for the relative safety of curbs know, that law has been broken many times each day. The police presumably figured enforcement of the law was not worth the effort, because of the countless violations. Now, after three pedestrians have been struck by vehicles so far this month—in each case the motorist was turning into pedestrian traffic—the police promise enforcement.

We trust the police will enforce the law sternly and continuously, even, if necessary, holding up traffic momentarily while offenders are stopped. Only by such rigorous enforcement can motorists be jolted out of this hazardous habit.

And, if traffic safety and mobility are to be much improved, pedestrians must accord motorists the courtesy of moving quickly across intersections. Nor will any thinking pedestrian endanger his own life and harry drivers by darting among moving vehicles. Common courtesy on the part of both driver and pedestrian, plus police enforcement of the law, can make Charlotte a more enjoyable, safer city in which to walk, drive and live.

From The Providence (R.I.) Bulletin

YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT NEXT

IN OLDEN DAYS, in the Age of Belief, momentous events were always preceded by mysterious warnings and portents, bearded comets whizzing through the sky, children born before their time and addressing the midwife in excellent Latin, rivers running upstream and fish flying in air. Does it mean nothing to this skeptical age that a 12-pound cod recently arrived off Provincetown bearing in its belly (in a billfold) an automobile driver's license issued in Los Angeles? Or that in Little Rock, Ark., a fish-bait dealer of scientific bent has developed a two-tailed worm?

Three hundred years ago either of these events would have sent our forefathers to their prayers, caused them to apprehend all manner of catastrophes, the fall of dynasties, the outbreak of war, plague and pestilence, a murrain on the cattle and a blight on the crops.

Yet we modern smart alecks read of the Provincetown marvel and shrug. "Huh!" we say. "Must be pretty easy to get a driver's license in California!" And all the significance we sated gluttons of wonder can see in the birth of the two-tailed Arkansas fishworm is a possible depopulation of our trout streams, caused by the fish dying of exhaustion from having to bite twice at every hook.

Oh ye of little faith! Have you never heard how, in ancient times, great changes and calamities were invariably heralded by an upswing in the birth rate of two-headed calves? Maybe destiny's Arouse and Beware Service has switched to two-tailed worms. Mark our words, something pretty big is in the offing, though we wouldn't know just what.

'Come Come, Now—Let's See How Clever You Are'

People's Platform

Letters should be brief. The writer's name and address must be given, but may be withheld from publication in the discretion of the Editor s. The News reserves the right to condense.

The News Spouts New Deal Socialistic Line

Iron Station

Editors, The News:

JUST WANTED to say I agree with most of the opinions expressed by Peter J. King of Monroe in his People's Platform letter published in your Monday issue, in which he charged your editorials "show a lack of editorial insight, objectivity, reasonableness or fair play."

Why make speeches that mean one thing, and write editorials that are opposites of your preachings? 'Course I can remember when The News' editorials were of a different slant and objective. Too much prejudices—or call it propaganda for the socialistic, New Deal, so-called liberal line of thinking—in your eds nowadays. I can always detect that "line" in your eds. Because look who is associated with you on your pages—Marquis Childs, Alsop brothers, Drew Pearson, James Marlow, et cetera. Newspaper readers aren't the dupes you think they are. They're capable of evaluating all issue of controversy on their merits, pro and con, in an impartial, objective manner. Are you? Doubtlessly not.

I, like Peter King, think you should take more note of what constitutes a fair and reliable newspaperman, editor or otherwise, by putting into practice what your own N. C. Press Association president advised all newspapers to do—report both sides of an issue fairly. Remain a reliable newspaper. Keep your readers' confidence. Don't slant the news.

—R. G. LATIN

How Arab Refugee Problem Originated

Binghamton, N. Y.

Editors, The News:

I AM writing in reference to the articles about Arab refugees, by Mr. Lynn Heinzerling, which appeared in recent issues of The News. While the presentation by Mr. Heinzerling is well-balanced, it unfortunately omits several pertinent matters which I think are important.

The origin of the Arab refugee problem is found in the not-to-be overlooked fact that the Arab nations, in defiance of the will of the United Nations, invaded Israel soon after the withdrawal of the British troops in May, 1948. It should not be forgotten that Israel came into existence by the will of the United Nations as the culmination of a series of plans for that territory, beginning in World War I when Feisal, the representative of the Arab peoples and later King of Iraq, agreed with the allied powers to the ultimate establishment of Palestine (which includes what is now the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan) as a Jewish national home.

And it also should not be forgotten that the State of Israel did not invade the Arab nations, but the Arab nations invaded the sovereign territory of the State of Israel. This invasion was continued even after the United Nations, for the first time in its history, declared the invasion by the Arab nations "a breach of the peace."

The Arab refugee problem came into being for two principal reasons. One, was the war itself, started and carried on by the Arab nations themselves. Two, because the Arab residents of the new state were ordered to leave the country by the Arab Higher Committee.

—RABBI ELIHU SCHAGRIN

McCarthy Is A Great Patriot

Charlotte

Editors, The News:

WITH YOUR kind indulgence, we'll begin this letter by playing "Who Said That?" Here is the quote:

"There is now a big anti-McCarthyite movement of the American people beginning to develop. It is therefore, the solemn duty of all leftwingers and progressives to bend all possible support to this elementary struggle in defense of democracy. One of the major things they can and must do in this fight is to make the masses realize the fascist character of McCarthyism. If this is done effectively, the battle will be well on the way to victory. We must, above all, teach the American people that 'McCarthyism is Fascism!"

Now who said that? Was it out of the tribe of Roosevelt? Or was it Adlai Stevenson? Could it be New York's Senator Lehman? Or was it one of the "Me-Too Trinity" of the News' editorial page — the Alsop Brothers, Drew Pearson, Marquis Childs?

The above quote was not authored by those mentioned, although any one of them could have been the author, as evidenced by their past tirades against McCarthy. However, the quote emanated from the pen of none other than Comrade William Z. Foster in the N. Y. Daily Worker of Dec. 4, 1953. Foster, as you may know, is top Red brass in the U. S.

In this same article he goes on to say with obvious satisfaction that Adlai, Eleanor, Lehman, and Truman are among the better known of those who have spoken out in denunciation of McCarthy and his sinister activities. Foster's purpose in naming this gullible quartet is, of course, in line with the old Lenin doctrine of using non-Communists to promote communism. It's the slickest of all Communist tricks, and it's blatantly apparent that it is being exploited to the fullest.

The issue is as clear as a ray of light! Moscow's orders are to annihilate McCarthy politically. It knows too well that he is a man who not only fully comprehends the perfidious nature of the Great Conspiracy afoot, but is possessed with the necessary measure of good old fashioned American know-how and courage to deal with it publicly most effectively.

Moscow knows that McCarthy is not a "Gentleman Pied Piper", as it and many of his rabid non-Communist adversaries would like him to be. He does not stand sphinx-like beside the polluted hole of communism in tuxedo, top hat, and silk gloves, and attempt in vain to coax the "rats" out of their hole by piping the sweet strains of "Clair de Lune". On the contrary, the Moscow conspirators well know that in Joe McCarthy they face an irrepressible American patriot who is proud to strip to the waist, and dig out the "rats" one by one for his countrymen to see and beware of.

—BOB CHERRY JR.

Two Grave Reports
Crisis In Indochina

WASHINGTON
By THE ALSOPS

INDOCHINA, the key to Southeast Asia, is more likely to be lost at the conference table in Geneva than on the battlefield of bloody Dien Bien Phu.

There are many signs and portents pointing in this direction. Take, for example, a recent little-noticed but deeply significant pronouncement by a member of the Chinese Politburo, Chen Yun. Chen Yun is the Politburo's principal expert on economic matters. As reported from Hong Kong by the Agence France Presse, Chen Yun, in a speech widely distributed in China, made the following significant points:

First, China and not Soviet Russia is the leader of the Communist revolution in Asia.

Second, as in the Soviet Union in its early days, the first duty of Communist China is to "consolidate the revolution." To think otherwise is to be guilty of the heinous sin of Trotskyism.

Third, while consolidating the revolution, the maintenance of world peace is essential. The Soviet Union was able to maintain peace for 20 years, and thus consolidate the Russian revolution.

Fourth, as in the case of Russia, this may make necessary certain temporary but inevitable retreats from the cause of Communism "in other countries." Chen Yun specifically recalled the situation of China in 1927, when "many lost courage" because the Soviet Union seemingly abandoned Chinese Communism. Yet this apparent retreat was actually in the real "interests of world revolution."

EVENTUAL VICTORY

Chen Yun at no point referred directly to Indochina. But his meaning is rather obvious. He is saying, "Russia let us down and yet we won. Therefore we can let the Indochinese Communists down and in the end they will win."

Add the significant statement by Soviet Premier Georgi Malenkov, who said recently that world war "under contemporary conditions of war means the death of world civilization." This is a real departure, since always in the past, war has meant to the Soviets the death, not of "world" civilization, but only of "capitalist" civilization. Add a constant barrage of propaganda from both Peking and Moscow to the effect that the "so-called cold war" can easily be ended by a simple resumption of normal trade and diplomatic relations.

Add also the facts of the Chinese economic situation. There are now wholly reliable reports that the huge Chinese Army is on half rations — and full Chinese rations are none too generous. There have been serious food riots in a number of cities. The industrialization plan is teetering on the edge of collapse, for want of raw materials. China now buys a full 76 per cent of her food and raw material imports from Russia, on extremely disadvantageous terms, and there is no more to be got from that source.

In short, China really does very badly need trade with the West. Put all these signs and portents together, and it begins to seem quite possible that Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov and Chinese Foreign Minister Chou en Lai may be getting ready to explode a bombshell at Geneva. The bombshell could take the form of an ostensibly reasonable offer to negotiate a truce in Indochina, including a promise to cut off supplies from China to Indochinese Communist Leader Ho Chi Minh.

The quid pro quo would be, of course, diplomatic recognition of Communist China by the great powers, including the United States; China's admission into the United Nations; and the restoration of "normal" — which means unrestricted — trade with China. Another probable proviso would be the staged withdrawal of French troops from Indochina.

The possibility that the Communist side will offer a deal along these lines must certainly at least be taken into account. So shrewd and well-informed an official as Walter Robertson, assistant secretary of state for the Far East is reported to believe that the odds are actually in favor of something of the sort. It is hard to exaggerate the extent of the crisis which would almost certainly ensue.

PARIS
By MARQUIS CHILDS

THE approaching crisis over the war in Indochina can no longer be concealed by the official optimism of Paris and Washington. There is a growing likelihood that in the months just ahead a grim choice will be put up to the Eisenhower administration.

That is to intervene directly with air and naval forces and, if necessary, later with ground forces, or to face the fact that the French must bring the eight-year war to an end even though this risks the loss to the Communists not only of Indochina but of most of Southeast Asia. No French official will say anything like this publicly. When it is suggested that direct American intervention may be necessary, they merely say they hope this will not be so.

But it is a hope that becomes more and more slender. French Minister of Defense Rene Pleven brought back from his inspection tour in Indochina a report believed to have been much more pessimistic than was publicly acknowledged. Part of this report concerns the importance the Communist overlords put on Ho Chi-minh, the leader of the Indochinese rebels, in the struggle for Asia. This indicates the Communists would ask a high price for termination of the conflict.

U. S. PAYING

Seventy-eight per cent of the actual cost of the war is being paid by the U.S.A. Moreover, the dollars from this source spent by the French for supplies in metropolitan France have a lot to do with keeping down the French dollar gap. The recent debate in the Assembly on the French military budget also brought out that the number of casualties of Frenchmen is smaller than has been generally believed.

The number of killed and missing since 1945 is 15,500. The number of wounded is 56,000. But, as the French point out, these are trained professional soldiers essential to form the cadres of new units for the French contribution to the European army. One of the points invariably raised by the French is that they can hardly be expected to build up the 14 French divisions slated for the European Army while at the same time they carry on the Indochinese war.

So many illusions have grown up around this strange war fought in places with weird names against an enemy that refuses to fight on conventional lines with conventional means. The major illusion now more or less publicly dispelled after eight years is that victory for the French is just around the corner. In the view of objective observers the war, as presently fought, cannot be won.

Would more direct American intervention serve to stiffen the determination of the Vietnamese? Or would they consider us as mere substitutes for the French in the war the Communists profess to be waging against whites and colonials? These are among the questions American policy makers must be pondering with something like the "agonizing reappraisal" that Secretary of State Dulles suggested would be essential if France failed to ratify the European Defense Community.

INTERVENTION'S DANGER

Many Frenchmen fear, as Pierre Mendes-France expressed it in his speech in the Assembly, that direct American intervention in Indochina will bring the intervention of Communist Chinese troops which will mean the beginning of World War III. They know, too, that Americans in influential positions in the Far East want just that to happen, since they are convinced that only through the destruction of the Communist dictatorship in China can American interests in the Pacific be made secure.

Up until now the French directing the Indochinese War have refused to permit Americans to do anything more than observe and supervise the loading of war material in Saigon. The idea that Lieut. Gen. John W. O'Daniel should go out to assist and perhaps take over the training of Vietnamese troops was successfully resisted from Paris. He is merely to be head of the American mission.

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round

Did McCarthy Violate Espionage Act?

WASHINGTON

SEN. McCARTHY is one of the most skillful political tacticians ever to operate in Washington. A strong believer that the hand is faster than the eye, Joe can shift to a new field of operation quicker than any other man in politics.

This week from the safety of the Senate Appropriations Committee he made accusations against me which he never would have dared make had he not been protected from the libel laws by Senate immunity. He used this immunity in exactly the same way he inserted a 60,000-word speech in the Congressional Record accusing Gen. George Marshall of being communistic, then incorporated his speech in a book on Marshall. It was the same tactic he also used against the Saturday Evening Post when he accused them of following the Communist line, but was careful to insert the letter in the Congressional Record before mailing it.

The timing of McCarthy's charges was interesting. In the first place he knew I was preparing a factual and devastating review of his Senate record for a television broadcast this weekend. Second, Joe needed some diversionary headlines to take the play away from the Senate investigation of himself and the Army which is not going at all well as far as he is concerned.

As for McCarthy's charges that I violated the Espionage Act and that one of my assistants blackmailed a Pentagon official, they are of course serious to anyone who doesn't know McCarthy. For those who don't, here are the facts:

The Pearson Record

1. The Pentagon official to whom McCarthy refers was Don Murray, an assistant to the chairman of the Munitions Board, whose job it was to handle press relations. As such he frequently saw one of my assistants, Fred Blumenthal, but at no time did Fred threaten, blackmail or try to intimidate Mr. Murray. Fred is a friendly guy who just doesn't operate that way and I would fire him if I had the slightest susnicion that he did. However, to make absolutely sure, I talked with both Murray and Blumenthal after McCarthy circulated this rumor last summer and I am convinced no such thing happened.

2. It is a fact, as McCarthy states, that some production figures were discussed by Murray with Blumenthal, but as McCarthy also admits, they were not published. It is not uncommon—in fact, it is almost a daily occurrence—for government officials to discuss confidential matters with responsible newsmen. But this obviously does not constitute a violation of the Espionage Act. If it did, almost every newspaperman in Washington would be in trouble. McCarthy's intimation that the figures were "used for other purposes" is absurd and untrue.

3. McCarthy's claim that a Justice Department official named Murray called me in and gave me all the facts on an espionage case just doesn't make sense. I never heard of the official in question, nor of any such case. However, it should be noted that even if McCarthy's piece of fiction had happened, it is no violation of the Espionage Act for a newspaperman to receive information from a government official. The American Society of Newspaper Editors at this very moment is fighting for a broadening of this right of the press for freer information.

Case Against McCarthy

Meanwhile, I suggest to Sen. McCarthy that he request a grand jury to consider various allegations that he violated the Espionage Act and the Corrupt Practices Act as follows:

1. The Army publicly stated, Sept. 11, 1953, that McCarthy violated the Espionage Act when he published a 75-page restricted Army intelligence report on Siberia. On the outside the document was clearly stamped: "This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage, title 18, U.S.C., sec. 793 and 794. The transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law." Yet despite this McCarthy made the document public.

2. Sen. McCarthy also violated the Espionage Act in a speech Jan. 22, 1951, in which he made public "document No. 3019 dated Dec. 15, 1950," this being a military report radioed from Korea. Revelation of the date of a radioed coded message makes it easier for a foreign power to break the code.

3. McCarthy collected $10,000 from congressman and Mrs. Alvin Bentley for the express purpose of fighting communism. According to an official Senate report he used the money not to fight communism but to speculate on the soybean market.

4. During four years as a senator McCarthy deposited $172,623 in the Riggs bank—a lot of money for a senator with a salary of $12,500. the Senate report which details his finances states that $10,000 was deposited in cash from unidentified sources; $40,562 in checks from unidentified sources. If these were campaign contributions, McCarthy is required by law to report them. If not, he has other obligations.

5. McCarthy's assistant, Ray Kiermas, deposited another $92,921 at the Riggs bank of which $29,230 was in cash. Not many people deal in cash these days, especially huge chunks of cash, and the Senate committee which reported these interesting finances wanted to know why.

Since Attorney Brownell came into office, the Justice Department has done absolutely nothing about the Senate report on McCarthy. If the senator has nothing to hide he might join me in urging that the whole matter go before a grand jury.